

*SJH*  
Executive Registry

75-2036/A  
OAC 75-0964/A

2 May 1975

**The Honorable Edward M. Kennedy, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Administrative Practice  
and Procedure  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
Washington, D. C. 20510**

**Dear Mr. Chairman:**

Your letter of April 24th poses an extensive set of questions with respect to this Agency's use of electronic surveillance. The questions apparently cover the use of electronic surveillance anywhere in the world by this Agency or by any foreign person, organization, or government connected in any way with the CIA.

Your letter particularly requests the authority under which this Agency conducts any such activity. The Agency's authority stems from the National Security Act of 1947 and directives of the National Security Council issued pursuant thereto, or as may be directed pursuant to the President's constitutional power to obtain foreign intelligence information.

The details of any Agency activity of this type involve many sensitive relationships and operations in pursuance of the Agency's mission of obtaining foreign intelligence. It is my understanding that such details are provided, pursuant to the precedent of the Senate, to the constituted oversight committees of the Agency, i.e., the subcommittees within the Armed Services and Appropriations Committees. As you know, a Select Committee of the Senate is currently also conducting an extensive review of Agency activities, in addition to these regular oversight committees. This arrangement was made by the Senate in view of the nature of foreign intelligence operations and pursuant to the duty laid on me in the National Security Act of 1947 to protect intelligence sources and methods from unauthorized disclosure. You may wish to

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discuss this important and sensitive matter with the Chairmen of those Committees, or I would be happy to discuss it with you personally at your convenience.

Of possible interest to your inquiries on this subject, may I refer you to the statement I gave to the Senate Appropriations Committee on 15 January 1975, which was released by that Committee to the press. A copy is attached, and you will find on page 30 reference to the Agency's activities in this field within the United States. As a result of further investigation, I amended certain of the specific figures involved in an addendum, also attached, which contains reference to this subject at page 3. I hope this will be responsive to your request within the limits established by the precedent of the Senate.

Sincerely,

**W. E. Colby**  
**Director**

## Attachments

OGC:GWC:sc

**Rewritten: DCI:WEC:blp**

**Distribution:**

**Original - Addressee via OLC**

1 - DDCI

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